

# YouthINK

A Newsletter of the United States Air Force Youth Program

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2001

## WORDS OF WISDOM

Someone once asked me what I want on my epitaph when I pass away. I replied, "Just the words, I tried." That's what this game of life is all about: trying. There are the triers, the criers, and the liars. I want to be known as one who simply tried my best.

Mickey Rooney

## The Courage to Be Imperfect

It takes courage to be a "good-enough" parent. This is what child psychiatrist, Rudolph Driekrus, calls "the courage to be imperfect." While there are plenty of perfect parenting standards to fall short of, there are no rules for how to be an imperfect parent. Here are the nine un-commandments for developing the "courage to be imperfect":

1. Children should be encouraged, not expected, to seek perfection.
2. Accept who you are rather than trying to be as good as or better than other parents.
3. Mistakes are aids to learning. Mistakes

See **Imperfect** on page 2

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## Helping Children to Write Well

As a parent, you can make a big difference in helping your child with writing. You can use helping strategies that are simple and fun. Use these strategies to help your child learn to write well...and enjoy doing it!

Here are some ideas:

**1. Make it real.** Your child needs to do real writing. It's more important for the child to write a letter to a relative than to add a brief note on a greeting card. Encourage children to write to relatives and friends. Perhaps your child would enjoy corresponding with a pen pal.

**2. Suggest note-taking.** Encourage your child to take notes on trips or outings to describe what was seen. This could include a description of nature walks, a boat ride, a car trip, or other events that lend themselves to note-taking.

**3. Brainstorm.** Talk with your child as much as possible about his impressions and encourage the child to describe people and events to you. If the description is especially accurate or colorful, say so.

**4. Keeping a journal.** This is excellent writing practice as well as a good way to vent feelings. Encourage your child to write about people, things that happen at school or home,

likes or dislikes and things the child would like to do. Especially encourage the child to write about his personal feelings and pleasures, as well as disappointments.

**5. Write together.** Have your child help you with letters, even routine ones such as ordering items from advertisements or writing to business firms. This helps the child understand that writing is important and shows them how writing fits into daily life.

**6. Use games.** There are numerous games and puzzles to help children increase vocabulary and make the child more fluent in speaking and writing. Remember, building a vocabulary helps build confidence.

**7. Suggest making lists.** Most children enjoy making lists just as they like to count. Encourage this. Making lists is good practice and helps a child become more organized. Children can make lists of their records, tapes, dolls, games, etc. It's also good practice to make lists of things to do such as schoolwork, dates for tests, social events, sports practices and games and other reminders.

**8. Encourage copying.** If a child likes a particular song, suggest learning the words by writing them down when they listen to the stereo or radio. Also encourage copying favorite poems or quotations from books and plays. Such activities help improve vocabulary and penmanship in addition to helping children learn to write better.

Source: *The U.S. Department of Education, December 2000.*

## DID YOU KNOW :

It is well documented that running can lower your risk for heart attacks. For those who do suffer a heart attack, a new study suggests that running can help you avoid a second one. According to a study by the University of Texas - Houston Health Science Center, people who had been active and maintained their activity level after a heart attack, or increased their activity level, had an 89% lower risk of death or a second heart attack than patients who remained sedentary.

Source: *Journal of the American heart Association, October 2000*

If you are interested in finding a pen pal for your child, check out these websites:

### Penpal Box

[www.ks-connection.org](http://www.ks-connection.org)

This site is sponsored by Kid's Space Connection. You'll find hundreds of e-mail listings for potential pen pals grouped in categories from 6 and under to age 13 to 16. The e-mail addresses for the child's parents, guardians or teacher are listed for security. You'll find contacts from all over the United States and from many other countries.

### Key Pals Club

[www.mightymedia.com/keypals](http://www.mightymedia.com/keypals)

This site, part of the Mighty Media Network, allows young people, students and teachers to correspond with other young people and students throughout the world.

## Coaches' Corner

### Building Better Team Unity

One of the greatest challenges facing any coach is building team unity. Team unity helps keep all players happy, leads to more fun, helps players develop greater respect for one another and creates a great framework in which to better teach fundamental skills, plays and tactics. Unity makes achieving team goals easier. The positives of team unity are hard to argue. So how do you keep a group of players with widely varying skill levels, unique personalities and different experience levels all happy?

Team unity is directly linked to individual player happiness. This happiness is not derived as much from winning as it is from having fun. Look at the smiles on the faces of a youth soccer team when they receive their treats following the game...even if they have just lost 10-0. The coaches and parents may not share the player's smiles but the kids have the right perspective. As players get older, winning does become more important. All coaches want to win, but it is more important for them to help every player develop values and friendships that will be remembered long after the memories of a win or loss fade.

Here are six ways to have fun building team unity:

**1. Post-game treats.** Don't underestimate the importance of this, even for older teams. If it is not important, why do many adults stop for one after a softball game or bowling. Consider making each player a captain for one game. As captain, they are responsible for bringing a treat that day for each member of the team.

**2. Team dinners.** Prior to a big game or a tournament, hold a team pot luck dinner. This can be a players only dinner or parents can be invited as well to become better acquainted with one another.

**3. Team party.** At the end of each season, hold a team party at a local restaurant or a pot luck at one of the parent's homes. Consider having each parent donate \$5 or \$10 to purchase a medal or trophy for each player. This simple token will last long after the season is forgotten. Consider throwing an off-season party to renew and strengthen friendships during the off season.

**4. Sleepovers.** Sleepovers are a great way for a team or group of players to become closer. However, they should not take place immediately *before* an event as they tend to have a dramatic and negative impact on performance.

**5. Community service.** Youth sports

Make the most of  
yourself, for that is all  
there is of you.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

### *Imperfect* continued from page 1

are not signs of failure. Anticipating or fearing mistakes will make us more vulnerable to failure.

4. Mistakes are unavoidable and are less important than what the parent does after he or she makes a mistake.

5. Set realistic standards for yourself and your child. Don't try correcting or changing too many things at one time.

6. Develop a sense of your strengths and weaknesses.

7. Mutual respect, between parent and child, starts by valuing yourself. Recognize your own dignity and worth before you try to show your child their dignity and worth.

8. Unhappy parents are frequently discouraged, competitive, unrealistic in their standards for themselves and their children, over ambitious, and unbalanced in their love and limits.

9. High standards and expectations are frequently related to parent's feelings of inferiority and lack of adequate parent resources. Parents need to develop the courage to cope with the challenges of living, which means, they must develop the "courage to be imperfect."

*Source: Reprint permission granted by Ron Huxley, author, speaker and father of four, from his book "Love & Limits Achieving a Balance in Parenting" available on-line at <http://parentingtoolbox.com/stop.html>.*

#### DID YOU KNOW :

Don't use a jacuzzi or sauna immediately after exercising. Your body can't cool itself when its environment is hotter than body temperature. Instead allow yourself at least 10 - 20 minutes to cool down after exercise.

*Source: Global Health Fitness, October 2000*

### *Coaches' Corner* continued

cannot exist without a framework of dedicated volunteers. Teach your players the importance of being involved. You can sing Christmas carols at local elderly housing projects, volunteer at various community service dinners or any other event in your community.

Players who have fun are happier players. Happy players have greater team unity. Good team unity makes your job as a coach, much easier. Have fun and get to know your players outside the competitive world of sports.

## Why Run?

We can think of hundreds of good reasons. Here are the 10 best:

**1. Running is the most efficient path to cardiovascular fitness.** Thirty minutes a day, four days a week will yield an excellent level of fitness in the shortest possible period of time.

**2. Running is the most accessible of aerobic sports.** No matter where you live or travel, an excellent area for running is almost always close by. You don't need to find a health club or worry about bringing along bulky equipment.

**3. Running is inexpensive and simple to learn.** You need good shoes, decent clothing and not much else to participate. Everyone knows how to run, and information on training is widely available.

**4. Running is the best method of stress reduction on the market.** Thirty minutes of running will work wonders in dissolving stress accumulated on the job.

**5. Running is an excellent component of any weight-control program.** Few activities burn calories more quickly.

**6. Running is a flexible method of training.** You can run at your own pace, with or without company, at whatever time of day suits you.

**7. Running makes you feel good.** Your fitness, self-esteem and confidence all will increase with a regular running program.

**8. The sport offers a unique opportunity for recreational runners to mix with world-class athletes.** You can't play in the Super Bowl or the NBA play-offs, but on almost every weekend, runners compete in the same events with the fastest human beings ever to inhabit the planet. There are also low-key social events that emphasize fun and friendship.

**9. Running is for families and individuals of all ages.** There are running programs for kids, "masters" programs for those over 40 and events for families.

**10. You'll be in good company.** Millions of people—including three of the last four presidents of the United States—already run for health, fun, fitness and competition. You'll find running clubs in almost every community in the country.

*Source: Reprinted by permission of the Road Runners Club of America: RRCA at 1150 S. Washington St., Ste 250, Alexandria, VA 22314 (703) 836-0558. March 2000*

#### DID YOU KNOW :

One of the most dramatic sociological changes during the past century was the participation of women in the work force. The number of women in the workplace tripled from 19% in 1900 to over 60% by the year 2000.

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau's Public Information Office, December 2000*

# Helping Overweight Children Develop a Good Attitude About Eating

Here are some ways to help your child develop good attitudes about eating.

**1. Don't place your child on a restrictive diet.** Children should never be placed on a restrictive diet to lose weight, unless a doctor supervises one for medical reasons. Limiting what children eat may be harmful to their health and interfere with their growth and development.

To promote proper growth and development and prevent children from becoming overweight, parents should offer the whole

***Most foods in your diet should come from the grain, vegetable and fruit groups.***

family a wide variety of foods from each of the food groups. It is important to balance the food groups in a daily eating pattern. Most foods in your diet should come from the grain, vegetable and fruit groups.

**2. Gradually cut down the amount of fat in the family diet.** Reducing fat cuts calories without depriving your family of nutrients. Use lowfat or non-fat dairy products, lean meats and poultry without skin, and low-fat breads and cereals. Do not restrict fat in the diets of children younger than 2 years of age.

**3. Don't overly restrict sweets or treats.** While it is important to be aware of the fat, sugar and salt content of food, all foods, even those that are high in fat or sugar, have places in our diets in moderation.

**4. Guide your family's choices.** Don't dictate foods, rather, help your children make smarter eating decisions by making a wide variety of healthful foods available in the house.

**5. Encourage children to eat slowly.** A child can detect hunger and fullness better when eating slowly.

**6. Eat meals together as a family as often as possible.** Try to make mealtimes a pleasant experience, not a time for scolding or arguing. If mealtimes are unpleasant, children may try to eat faster and will learn to associate eating with stress.

**7. Involve children in food shopping and preparation.** Such activities can help teach children about nutrition and making good food decisions. Children may also be more willing to try new foods that they helped prepare.

**8. Plan for snacks.** Continuous snacking leads to overeating. Plan specific times of the day for snacks that will not spoil the child's appetite at mealtime. Make snacks as nutritious as possible without depriving your child of occasional chips or cookies.

*Source: National Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases Weight Control Information Network, December 2000.*

## DID YOU KNOW :

Americans average 20 teaspoons of sugar daily in the form of added sweeteners in beverages and packaged foods. This translates to 18% of our total calorie intake for the day or almost three times the amount suggested by most health organization professionals.

Hints for cutting back:

**1. Don't forgo sweets entirely.** This will likely set off a sugar binge. Appease your desire with frequent but small servings.

**2. Think small.** When buying sweets look for single serving or small serving sizes.

**3. Make sweet calories count.** Select sweets that offer some nutritional value. Look for fat-free sweets or sweets that contain fiber or vitamins and minerals.

**4. Eat sweets with meals.** Eating a sugary sweet with or at the end of a meal helps keep portions small.

Now, make that box of Valentine's Day chocolates last!

*Source: www.runnersworld.com/nutrition, December 2000*

## WEBSITES OF INTEREST

### In-Sites

#### GREAT STUDY HELPERS:

Here are four great sites to help students with their homework in a fun way!

Kids who would rather stare at the television than surf for help with school projects can tune into this site. It looks like a television screen, complete with "channels" that have names such as science or math. Grades 1-8 can pick a subcategory to get information about specific areas of interest. If all else fails, ask grade school guru Mr. Knowitall for extra help.

[www.afterschool.to](http://www.afterschool.to)

With hundreds of volunteers on hand to help, no question should go unanswered. The site promises results within 24 hours. If you cannot wait that long, jump into one of the interactive forums or chat rooms for more timely results. Grade 1 through college.

[www.brainmania.com](http://www.brainmania.com)

Browse through 27 categories, from math to maps and government to grammar. Hundreds of links, even to such hard subjects as Latin and entomology. Grades 5-12.

[www.schoolwork.org](http://www.schoolwork.org)

Pick any subject; more than 128,000 reviewed and researched Web addresses should provide something for every student. The Study Buddy has extra school supplies, including an encyclopedia, a calculator, news, sports scores and more.

[www.studyweb.com](http://www.studyweb.com)

## Help Your Family Grow Even Stronger

**B**uilding a strong family is like building a house. We do it brick by brick, one day at a time. Here is my blueprint:

**It's the little things that yield big results.** It's always the little things you remember from childhood like playing catch with mom or jumping into a pile of leaves with dad on a fall Saturday morning.

**Make the ordinary extraordinary.** Take a moment with children to appreciate the joy and wonder of the world around them.

**Share what you love with your child.** Parents are children's primary teacher in life. You are an expert in their eyes. Share your hobby or talent with them.

**Teach, but never stop learning.** Learning is a two-way street. If you don't know how to in-line skate...learn from your children. If you have trouble with the computer consult the children first - they can probably help.

**Make a mess a minute.** Children love a good mess. Let's face it - a mess is often the result of a great time.

**Carry on traditions and start some new ones.** Traditions connect us through generations. It can be as simple as a candlestick that comes out once a year, a recipe, a special way of saying thank you. Share the old and create the new with your children.

**Give the gift of time.** The formative years matter. The moments you spend with your children now will help mold them into caring and giving adults. There is no greater gift than time given to someone else.

*Source: Used by permission (copyright) Donna Erickson, host of "Donna's Day on Odyssey, a Hallmark & Henson Entertainment Network. Donna's activities may be found in her award winning book, "Prime Time Together...With Kids", Augsburg Press.*



# Travis AFB Youth Center Wins Boys & Girls Club of America's High-Yield Learning Activity Award

**T**ravis Air Force Base Youth Center has received a High-Five Award for its outstanding High-Yield Learning Activity (HYLA) from Boys & Girls Clubs of America (B&GCA). B&GCA presented the first-ever High-Five Awards in each of the five core program areas for outstanding HYLAs at the National Education Summit 2000 held in Atlanta. JCPenney sponsored the awards ceremony and proudly supported the Club's efforts. Travis was the only Air Force installation to walk away from the ceremony with this honor.

High-Five Awards for Outstanding High-Yield Learning Activities are presented to Clubs that provide extraordinary opportunities for youth to develop higher literacy levels while maturing physically and emotionally. The programs are also designed to encourage

Travis was the only Air Force installation to walk away from the ceremony with this honor.

interpersonal, ethics and spiritual development. Club youth engage in acts of problem solving, reading, writing, and verbal communication to improve their skills in these areas. Clubs across the country submit their entries to compete in the five core program areas: character and leadership development, education and career development, health and life skills, fitness and recreation, sports, and the arts.

The Travis Air Force Base Youth Center received the award for its program "What Should I Do?". Kindergartners through sixth graders participated in a weekly course of 30-minute instruction during the summer of 2000. The Travis AFB chaplain taught the classes and varied the plans for each age group. The object of the course was to make the children more sensitized to moral choices that they make each day. They were to become more aware of bad choices that others have made and the resulting consequences. "The class helped them develop their moral reasoning skills by presenting them with situations, real and imaginary, that stimulated their imagination and their desire to make good choices," the instructor said.

Sandy Latchford, Travis AFB Youth



Director, is positive this type of program would be helpful to youth at other Air Force installations as well. "Other Air Force bases are no different from Travis," Latchford said. "There isn't any base that I know of that doesn't have a chaplain that couldn't conduct a similar program. I feel it was very beneficial."

*Above, the Travis AFB Chaplain helps children develop moral reasoning and decision-making skills as part of their award-winning "What Should I Do?" High-Yield Learning Activity Program.*

## UNITED STATES AIR FORCE SERVICES

# Youth LINK

## A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of the United States Air Force Youth Program

Please visit: [www-p.afsv.af.mil/FamilyMemberPrograms.youthmain.htm](http://www-p.afsv.af.mil/FamilyMemberPrograms.youthmain.htm)

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FEBRUARY/MARCH



## FUN FACTS

- One big difference between seals and sea lions is that sea lions have long, strong flippers which they use to help themselves walk on land. Seals cannot use their flippers to walk on land.
- A zebra's stripes are used to identify one zebra from another just as we use fingerprints to identify one human from another.

# FUN & GAMES

FROM THE EDITORS OF YOUTHLINK

## Comedy Corner

If it takes a cup of chocolate chips to make a batch of chocolate chip cookies and a cup of peanut butter to make a batch of peanut butter cookies...how many cups of Girl Scouts does it take to make a box of Girl Scout Cookies?

Source: NIEHS Kids Pages, [www.niehs.nih.gov/kids](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids)

### DID YOU KNOW:

While on Safari in the deepest part of Africa, Professor Smith woke one morning with a start and felt something in the pocket of his pajamas. It had a head and a tail but no legs! When the professor sat up to get out of bed he could feel it move inside his pocket. But the professor wasn't concerned at all. Why?

*He knew it was just a coin!*

## ? Who Am I?

How many clues before you can guess who this person is?

1. Born in New Orleans, Louisiana.
2. Runs a foundation to benefit needy children in several inner-city areas.
3. Loves to play golf.
4. Played college football at San Diego State, the only school interested in him as a running back.
5. Drafted second in the draft by the Indianapolis Colts where he earned NFL Rookie of the Year Honors.
6. In 2000, he set a record for most touchdowns in a season playing for the St. Louis Rams.
7. Won the 2000 NFL Most Valuable Player Award

See lower right corner for answer.

## ? Where am I?

### THIS NATIONAL PARK:

1. Became a National Park in November of 1978.
2. Has the largest protected mixed grass prairie in the United States, which covers almost one quarter million acres.
3. Has 11,000 years of human history in the park.
4. Is home of the black-footed ferret, the most endangered land mammal in North America.
5. Includes the evolution of many species of mammals in the rock formations of this park.
6. Is located in South Dakota.

See lower right corner for correct answer.

## Laughs From the Animal Kingdom

1. What does a bee use to brush his hair?  
*A honeycomb.*
2. What do you get when you cross a cow with a rabbit?  
*Hare in your milk.*
3. What animal keeps the best time?  
*A watch dog.*
4. What time is it when an elephant sits on your fence?  
*Time to get a new fence.*
5. What do birds need when they are sick?  
*Medical tweetment.*
6. Why do seagulls fly over the sea?  
*Because if they flew over the bay, they would be bagels.*
7. What did the porcupine say to the cactus?  
*Is that you, momma.*
8. What do whales eat?  
*Fish and ships.*
9. What do you get when you cross a cow with a duck?  
*Milk and quackers.*
10. What do you call a gorilla wearing ear muffs?  
*Anything you want - he can't hear you.*



## Comedy Corner

Once a duck went into a restaurant and asked "Do you have any grapes?" The waiter said "We do not allow animals or birds into this restaurant so you'll have to leave!" The duck waddled away but came back an hour later. Again he asked, "Do you have any grapes?" The waiter said "I told you we do not serve ducks or any animals here. Go away! And if you come in here again, I'll staple your feet to the floor!" An hour later the duck returned and asked, "Do you have any staples?" The waiter yelled "No!!!" "Good" said the duck, "then do you have any grapes?"

Source: NIEHS Kids Pages, [www.niehs.nih.gov/kids](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids)

ANSWER TO WHO AM I: Marshall Faulk

ANSWER TO WHERE AM I: Badlands

ANSWERS TO WORD WISE SCRAMBLE

1. Vermont, 2. Arizona, 3. Florida, 4. Wisconsin, 5. Oregon, 6. California, 7. Nebraska, 8. Virginia, 9. Kentucky, 10. Wyoming





## DID YOU KNOW:

Each year on the third Monday in February we celebrate President's Day to observe the birthdays of two of our most famous and popular presidents; George Washington, born February 22, 1732 and Abraham Lincoln, born February 12, 1809.

But did you know that neither one of them ever said the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag. Nor did John Adams, Thomas Jefferson or Andrew Jackson.

That's because the Pledge of Allegiance was not written until 1892 when Francis Bellamy wrote the famous pledge for Youth's Companion, a boy's magazine, as part of a Columbus Day celebration.

It was not written by Richard Sands...you know "...and to the republic for Richard Sands...".

Source: Mailbits Trivia at [www.mailbits.com](http://www.mailbits.com). for free downloads of cartoons, jokes and greeting cards.

# Celebrating...

## VALENTINE'S DAY

Every February 14th, across the country, candy, flowers, cards and gifts are exchanged between friends and loved ones all in the name of St. Valentine. But who is this mysterious saint.

Details are sketchy at best but one popular belief is that Saint Valentine was a priest who served Rome during the third century. The Roman ruler Claudius decided single men make better soldiers so he outlawed marriage for young single men. Valentine defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret.

An outraged Claudius sentenced Valentine to death for his actions. While in prison awaiting his execution, Valentine fell in love with a young girl who visited him often during his confinement. Before his death, he wrote her a love letter and signed it "From your Valentine", an expression still in use today.

Americans began exchanging

hand-made Valentines in the early 1700's. In the 1840's, Esther A. Howard began to sell the first mass-produced valentines in America.

According to the Greeting Card Association, an estimated one billion valentine cards are sent each year, making Valentine's Day the second largest card-sending holiday behind Christmas. Approximately 85% of all valentines are purchased by women.

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## cyberKIDZ on-line & in touch

### Interactive Fun Puzzles

Puzzles that children can directly manipulate on the web page, teaching math, thinking and general problem solving skills. Learning in a very fun way!

[www.ysn.com](http://www.ysn.com)

Can you unscramble these letters to make names of states:

1. movetrn

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

2. nozraia

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

3. oldaire

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

4. nsinciswo

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

5. gooner

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

6. railfacoin

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

7. seakrabb

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

8. gainrivi

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

9. neckykut

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

10. gymnowi

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

# WORD WISE

Can you find the 25 body parts listed to the right in this puzzle? Remember, look forward, backward and diagonal, too.

F	O	A	T	E	Y	E	R	B	A	N	E	S	O
I	S	T	O	M	A	C	H	A	L	R	T	P	H
N	E	O	F	R	N	A	M	I	W	O	E	I	A
G	L	A	I	U	N	S	V	T	P	S	L	N	R
E	B	S	N	D	C	E	R	I	G	E	C	E	T
Y	O	E	G	O	R	A	N	T	R	N	S	O	E
A	W	P	E	S	E	V	E	I	N	I	U	U	R
O	E	A	R	H	V	E	F	O	O	T	M	L	Y
B	O	N	E	B	B	R	A	I	N	S	R	E	H
N	E	E	L	P	S	J	E	R	T	E	A	E	T
T	I	R	S	K	U	L	L	E	O	T	I	N	E
O	U	R	C	L	I	G	A	M	E	N	T	K	E
P	A	N	K	L	E	P	A	M	H	I	P	O	T

**STOMACH**  
**LIVER**  
**HEART**  
**LUNG**  
**INTESTINES**  
**SPLEEN**  
**BRAIN**  
**SPINE**  
**KNEE**  
**ELBOW**  
**ANKLE**  
**FOOT**  
**HAND**  
**FINGER**  
**TOE**  
**SKULL**  
**EYE**  
**EAR**  
**VEIN**  
**ARTERY**  
**LIGAMENT**  
**TEETH**  
**HIP**  
**MUSCLE**  
**BONE**

See opposite page for answers.

